A Study on Smart Teaching Mode of Teachermate-Based Business English Intensive Reading in Higher Vocational Colleges

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Abstract: Smart education represents the development trend of future education and the inevitable stage of the development of educational informatization. Teachermate platform is a light application tool for classroom interaction. It is easy to operate, convenient, practical, and interesting, which is conducive to the development of smart teaching in business English classroom. Therefore, this paper makes further research and exploration on smart teaching of Business English Intensive Reading course with the help of Teachermate platform, so as to enhance learning autonomy and enthusiasm, and finally improve the teaching quality of Business English Course effectively.

1. Introduction

The Declaration on the Construction of the New Liberal Arts points out that the new mission in the new era requires the liberal arts education to accelerate its innovative development. With the surging tide of new science and technology and industrial revolution, social problems are becoming increasingly comprehensive and complicated. To cope with new changes and solve complex problems, it is urgent to integrate the knowledge of interdisciplinary majors, and promoting the integration and development is an inevitable choice for the construction of new liberal arts [1].As an important component of liberal arts, foreign language is of great importance to realize its innovative development. According to the principles and requirements of new liberal arts construction, business English talents should cultivate interdisciplinary, high-quality and compound innovative talents according to the new evaluation requirements and standards. In the face of the internationalization, diversification, individualization and interdisciplinary needs of foreign language talents, the traditional cramming teaching method in class greatly limits the creativity and enthusiasm of students, especially in business English teaching in higher vocational colleges. It is difficult for students to practice their language application ability and cultivate solid basic language skills by accepting knowledge passively. Cross-cultural ability, business communication ability and innovation and entrepreneurship ability can't develop harmoniously. Therefore, it is urgent to integrate information-based teaching mode and means into foreign language teaching, explore efficient and novel teaching methods, improve the level and quality of business English teaching in higher vocational colleges, and promote the innovative development of foreign language teaching.

This paper attempts to explore the further research and exploration of business English classroom teaching in higher vocational colleges with the help of information-based teaching methods under the background of smart teaching.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Smart Education

Smart education can be traced back to the "Smart Earth" strategy put forward by IBM [2]. With regard to the definition of its concept, Yang Xianmin pointed out from the ecological perspective that smart education is an educational information ecosystem that is connected with things, smart, perceptive and ubiquitous, relying on the new generation of information technologies such as Internet of Things, cloud computing and wireless communication. It is the advanced development stage of digital education, aiming at improving the smart level of the existing digital education system and realizing the deep integration of information technology and mainstream business of education (smart teaching, smart management, smart evaluation, smart research and smart service) [3]. Education is the product of economic globalization, technological change and knowledge explosion, and it is also the inevitable stage of educational informatization development. Nowadays, with the popularization of emerging information technologies such as Internet of Things, big data and cloud computing in the field of education, smart education has been endowed with new connotations and characteristics [4].

The application of information technology in the field of education represents the future direction of information technology reform education, and the development of smart education is the focus of scholars. Many previous research mainly focus on the theoretical aspects of its connotations, concepts, characteristics [2,4], and the specific exploration, evaluation and development of college English smart teaching mode [5-8]. However, the specific exploration and practice of smart teaching mode for English majors in higher vocational colleges are few. English courses in higher vocational colleges are also an important part of foreign languages in higher education. Therefore, the study of English smart teaching in higher vocational colleges makes up for the deficiencies in the development of smart teaching in other aspects of foreign language discipline, and expands the application of how technology development innovates education.

2.2 Teachermate Platform

Teachermate platform is a classroom interactive light application tool launched by Central China Normal University and Huazhong University of Science and Technology. It emphasizes the simple, convenient, practical and interesting process evaluation and teaching. It can easily help teachers set up a smart classroom for teacher-student interaction via information-based teaching methods ,thus improving teaching efficiency [9].

The application provides a variety of interactive functions such as class check-in, class test, class discussion, etc. It encourages students to actively participate in classroom interaction with gamification thinking, and encourages teachers to carry out teaching practice and innovation with convenient operation, thus, improving teaching efficiency. Through Teachermate, students can check in, answer questions and discuss in class using cellphones. Attendance, class discussions, virtual forum speeches, homework and quizzes can all be recorded so that teachers can continuously observe the whole process of students' learning and make the final formative evaluation.

The use of teachermate is based on wechat (Teachermate wechat public account), which does not require teachers and students to download apps, and is not subject to communication networks and cellphone versions [9]. In the process of Teachermate teaching, students can sign in, answer

questions and participate in discussions within a short time. Teachermate can count the students' participation scores in real time, and displays them clearly on the teacher's web screen in the form of data and tables.

According to the different student participation rate and answer rate, the teacher can adjust the teaching progress. Teachermate does not need teachers to learn a lot of software knowledge, and ease their teaching burdens; There is no need for students to adapt to too many means of course presentation, which will not increase their academic burden; There is no need for educational administrators to improve classroom hardware conditions to the latest level and increase the burden of teaching expenditure in colleges and universities.

2.3 Business English Intensive Reading

Business English Intensive Reading of is a core course for Business English majors. It is a language course that focuses on language skills, supplemented by business skills, integrates practicality and communication, and employs various teaching modes and methods. The nature of the course is to develop students' comprehensive English ability in the context of international business. The study of this course can help students further lay the foundation of business language and business knowledge so as to cultivate talents who can engage in foreign trade and business work in English.

The course of Business English Intensive Reading is generally set up in the first and second academic years for a total of four semesters, with four to six periods a week. It has the highest score of all courses and lasts for the longest time, almost throughout the whole college study time. Through a systematic learning this course, students are able to master the basic terms and expressions of business English, understand the basic business rules and processes of foreign trade and business operations, and skillfully use business knowledge and language skills to explain and express daily events in business activities and solve common problems in daily business operations.

Although many colleges and universities are willing to carry out teaching reform practice and explore new teaching modes, they still cannot completely get rid of the shackles of exam-oriented education at present. The class of Business English Intensive Reading is still rather dull, and many teachers and students reflect that it is difficult to achieve satisfactory teaching results. Obviously, the traditional cramming teaching has been unable to meet the teaching requirements of English majors in higher vocational colleges at present, and the teaching mode and teaching means need to be reformed urgently.

3. Current Situation and Problems of BE Teaching in Higher Vocational Colleges

3.1 Teaching Materials and Curriculum Resources Are Single and Lack of Pertinence.

The course of Business English Intensive Reading is mainly carried out through the content of teaching materials, which has higher requirements for the selection of teaching materials and teaching resources. Once there is a mistake in the selection of teaching materials, the teaching quality of the course will be affected. In addition, the traditional classroom content "pays more attention to theory than practice". Even if the textbook is selected reasonably, the development of front-line classroom activities will be constrained by the textbook content. Vocabulary, sentence patterns, expressions and other contents will mainly rely on textbook resources for training. Nowadays, it is difficult for foreign language textbooks to keep pace with the times, and many topics may be out of date with the times. Therefore, it is even more difficult to ensure that the cultivation of foreign language talents keeps pace with the development of the times, and it cannot meet the requirements of the spirit of "mass entrepreneurship and innovation" for the education

mechanism in the current new era [10].

3.2 Higher Vocational College Students Have a Weak English Foundation.

The foundation of English majors in higher vocational colleges is weak, which is mainly reflected in the lack of solid grammar in middle school, the lack of vocabulary, and the weak awareness of active learning. They are unable to pronounce words correctly, have a low reading level and are full of grammar mistakes. Due to poor listening ability, they are unable to keep up with the progress of the class. "I don't understand; I don't have enough vocabulary; It's difficult to answer questions; I am afraid of speaking; Therefore, the interaction between teachers and students is insufficient. The overall class is relatively dull and boring. For a long time, students are more lack of interest in English learning, lose enthusiasm and initiative, and the classroom teaching effect and teaching quality are hardly ideal.

3.3 Teachers and Practical Teaching Ability Need to Be Improved.

Faculty team and faculty strength are important factors to ensure the quality of professional teaching. The strategic background of "One Belt and One Road" requires international and compound talents. In a sense, it also has higher requirements on the level of teachers and teams. At present, the teaching team of business English major in higher vocational colleges tends to be composed of full-time theoretical teachers and insufficient part-time experts and mentors from industrial enterprises, who have less practical teaching capacity.

The "double-qualified" level of teachers needs to be improved, and the leading teachers need to be expanded in order to improve the reputation of schools and majors in related industries [10]. In class, English language points are the main task, and the content combined with specific business practices is limited. The cramming, indoctrination and lecturing methods still play a major role in the front-line classroom, and the practical part of business English has not been paid enough attention.

4. Construction and Design of Business English Intensive Reading Teaching Mode Based on Teachermate

In view of the problems of poor classroom teaching effect of Business English Intensive Reading, poor learning enthusiasm and initiative of students, less and dull classroom interaction, the author believes that smart teaching methods can increase interaction and interest, enrich classroom arrangement, effectively improve classroom teaching effect and teaching quality. There are a variety of smart teaching methods. WeChat official account of Teachermate and its smart teaching platform are used to design and carry out the teaching of Business English Intensive Reading, which can be divided into three stages: pre-class preparation, classroom teaching and after-class feedback.

In this paper, the Teachermate platform is used as the teaching aid, and the presentation of its smart teaching is studied from the specific teaching practice, and on this basis, the smart teaching mode is constructed.

4.1 Pre-Class Preparation

Business English Intensive Reading consists of different units. According to the main topics of each unit, teachers can further clarify the important and difficult points of teaching, teaching objectives, teaching contents and modularize the knowledge, and make teaching materials for students to learn independently, such as courseware, handouts, videos and other resources, and

upload them to the courseware column in advance, and then open them for students to view or download. After opening, students will also receive a push from the WeChat public account in case they miss the message.

For example, when teaching the third unit People of "New Standard Business English Series Textbook Comprehensive Course Book One", teachers can upload the unit guide first, and guide students to think about the unit theme by means of words, pictures, videos, etc. At the same time, in the discussion column, set questions like, "(1) List some examples of successful business leaders who have started a completely new business.""(2) What makes business leaders successful?" to strengthen students' thinking about the topic. In addition, upload the word audio and text audio in the courseware column for students to read after, so as to improve their basic listening and speaking ability. Some students have great difficulties in pronunciation of words. Through this kind of audio learning and repeated imitation, they can carry out good pronunciation correction exercises and improve their listening and speaking ability.

4.2 In-Class Teaching

In the classroom teaching process of Business English Intensive Reading, teachers can design different classroom teaching activities through various columns of Teachermate platform, which can effectively stimulate students' learning interest and enrich classroom teaching content.

Check-in activities. The sign-in function of Teachermate platform can issue the sign-in instructions online, so that students' attendance can be quickly and conveniently grasped, and the time and effort of mechanical roll call in traditional college English classroom can be avoided. In addition, check-in methods are also flexible, such as QR code check-in, GPS positioning check-in and ordinary check-in. The former two are suitable for offline, while the latter is suitable for online distance teaching, which can not only attract students' interest, but also save valuable classroom time. For students who don't attend normally, they can also be marked according to the actual situation, such as being late, absent from class, asking for leave, etc. The system has its own statistical function. After signing in, the attendance of each student in the whole semester can be led into a file form, which helps teachers to know the overall attendance of students. In the process of check-in, individual problems will also be encountered. For example, students do not bring their mobile phones, or their mobile phone configuration is low or the signal is weak and other problems. In these cases, teachers can use the teacher's end to make up the sign-in for students. In addition, students who are not present can also be marked, such as absenteeism, leave and so on. The whole operation process is time-consuming, efficient and humanized.

Discussion and group activities. The Teachermate platform can also set interactive columns such as grouping, discussion and answering questions. For some open questions in class, teachers can set up topics for discussion, and students can share their opinions by posting, so as to train students' thinking and ability of analyzing and solving problems. Finally, the students' opinions can be presented in the form of word clouds. Students can see the core vocabulary they share in different colors forming centripetal circles, which are vivid and interesting. For example, in teaching Unit Four, Brand Names, the topic "Share some famous brand names you know" was assigned to students in advance, and then officially opened in the class. Compared with the traditional classroom, students don't have to worry about losing face, instead, they will express their opinions. Such classroom activities also facilitate teachers to master students' participation, realize students' mutual communication, and improve their practical English application ability.

Quiz and test. In the daily teaching, teachers can also distribute staged tests in the test columns such as answering questions, quick answers every day, and examinations and other test at any time on Teachermate accordingly, so as to grasp the students' knowledge in time. Teachers can input

questions in advance on the platform and release them to students at an appropriate time, and students can receive answers directly through the mobile phone terminal. Futhermore, the test questions provided by the platform are various, including multiple-choice questions, true-false questions, fill-in-the-blank questions, short-answer questions, reading questions and so on. For the objective questions, the system realizes automatic grading, which saves a lot of time for Teachers. At the same time, teachers can also export data from record to clearly understand the students' answers, such as answer time and answer accuracy, etc. If the on-site test is conducted in the classroom, the platform also realizes the online invigilation function, which can monitor students' test status at any time. For students' common mistakes, teachers will focus on them and give further explanation, which will not only help students learn language points, but also improve their overall learning effect.

4.3 After-Class Feedback

After the course, teachers can design various forms of after-school learning tasks according to what they have learned in this lesson, and post them in Teachermate platform, WeChat client will be posted to students' mobile phones in the form of push, reminding students to complete after-school tasks in time. Students can also complete tasks in various ways, and teachers will grade or comment on the students' performance.

Assignment. The homework for Business English Intensive Reading can be in various forms, such as audio, video, written text, etc. For example, you can post word audio, ask students to read after them, and record and upload them. Upload relevant micro-lessons according to the course content for students to learn and express their opinions. Video recording tasks, such as original role play, can also be assigned as needed. Teachers can also set up peer review so that students can participate, learn from and supervise each other.

After-school learning resources push. Teachers can also push relevant resources as supplements according to the content of this chapter to enrich classroom content and enhance learning interest. Through the process of autonomous learning, students can stimulate their interest in learning, change passive learning into active learning, and gradually develop independent learning habits, so as to improve their English listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation abilities.

Teaching statistics. The statistical function of Teachermate can count the contents of each part, and clearly and intuitively display the proportion of audio, video, chapter tests, documents and other teaching contents. Teachers can also make appropriate adjustments according to the actual teaching situation. In addition, the distribution of students' comprehensive scores shows the proportion of the number of students in each score section, which enables teachers to make an overall evaluation and judgment on the students' learning level and learning effect in this class, and realize formative evaluation.

5. Conclusion

The smart teaching mode of Business English Intensive Reading is carried out by using the micro-teaching assistant platform, which emphasizes the teacher-led and student-centered teaching. The multi-dimensional interaction between teachers and students in class not only effectively combine teaching with learning, but also realizes students' learning anytime and anywhere, which is conducive to improving students' enthusiasm and initiative in learning. It has become an inevitable trend for smart teaching tools represented by Teachermate to enter college foreign language classes in colleges and universities. However, due to the limitation of student number and subject number, this study cannot represent the whole situation of higher vocational colleges. Therefore, how to effectively carry out smart teaching and ensure teaching quality by using smart teaching tools

remains to be further explored and practiced. Foreign language teachers in colleges and universities should continue to explore and deepen the reform of smart teaching mode, guide students to use smart teaching tools for autonomous learning, so as to enhance learning autonomy and enthusiasm, and ultimately improve the overall quality of college English teaching.

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